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PRESS RELEASE

USG TO PROVIDE 90,000 METRIC TONS OF FOOD AID TO BANGLADESH IN 2008

PART OF THE AID WILL GO TO CYCLONE SIDR AFFECTED PEOPLE

DHAKA, APRIL 1 -- The United States Government will provide approximately 90,000 metric tons of food aid worth \$67.8 million to Bangladesh this year. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) will distribute this assistance from the American people. In fact, USAID partners, CARE and Save the Children, have already received several consignments of this food aid which includes wheat, vegetable oil and yellow peas. The next consignment, shipped on the “Liberty Eagle”, is already enroute and scheduled to arrive at the Chittagong seaport on May 15th. This shipment contains approximately 50,000 metric tons of wheat. One third of the food aid will be used to assist Cyclone Sidr affected people of Barguna and Bagerhat districts and the rest will be distributed as part of the United States Government’s regular food aid programs in the flood prone and seasonally food insecure areas of the country.

U.S. supported food aid programs target the poorest of the poor who live in the most food insecure and vulnerable areas of the country and food aid assistance is designed to bridge the gap between disaster response and development by supporting planning and preparedness activities. Through USAID, the U.S. Government has helped build 245 multi-purpose disaster shelters, developed about 4,000 community-based disaster mitigation structures, and established a stockpile of emergency disaster kits for 30,000 families. We provided training to local disaster committees, volunteers and school teachers in 271 of the country’s 277 disaster-prone sub-districts. The program focuses on protection of assets by raising homesteads, and by building raised access roads to markets and schools. The program develops alternate livelihood options for the ultra-poor through

activities such as poultry raising, dairy farming, and vegetable gardening. The program also provides a safety net for the poor through food and cash for work projects. In all, program activities are helping 4 million people in more than 3,000 villages. USAID's five year Food Security and Disaster Management Program will address disaster risk mitigation and adaptation to climate change threats.

The U.S. Government has provided more than \$19 million in emergency funds to support relief and early recovery activities since Cyclone Sidr made landfall in southern Bangladesh on November 15, 2007. The U.S. Government continues to monitor the recovery and reconstruction efforts to help rebuild the cyclone affected areas in Bangladesh.

USAID is the principal U.S. Government agency that implements development assistance programs in more than 100 countries around the world. From 1971 to 2007, the U.S. Government has provided more than \$5 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh, with over half of that amount in food aid. In 2007, we provided \$82 million in development assistance to the people of Bangladesh.

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GR/ 2008

Note: A Bangla translation of this article is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>